



Mariposa County Fire Advisory Committee MEETING AGENDA August 10, 2023

DATE: August 10, 2023

TIME: 9:30 AM

LOCATION: Mariposa County Fire Department Head Quarters
4802 Highway 140 (Executive Meeting Room)
Mariposa, CA 95338

PLEASE NOTE- This meeting will be at the Mariposa County Fire Department
Public members may either call-in or attend in person.

Teleconference option available (see below for call in participation information)

Dial in- United States: 1 (650) 564-3271

Audio Conferencing PIN: 531 456 341#

Members of the public who wish to participate in the meeting are invited to do so by submitting written comments or calling in the teleconference number. Public comment should be for non-agenda items. You'll be heard during public comment period and may be limited to 3 minutes. No conclusion should be drawn if committee doesn't address your comment.

MCFAC Advisory Committee written commenting processes are as follows

WRITTEN COMMENTS: Written comments may be submitted via U.S. Postal Service, email or may be dropped off at the Planning Department. In your written communication please note in the subject line: Which Advisory Committee you are commenting to and indicate which "PUBLIC COMMENT ITEM #" (insert the item number relevant to your comment) or "PUBLIC COMMENT NON-AGENDA ITEM" that you are commenting on.

1) Mail • Send written communication to:

Mariposa County Fire Department
PO Box 2039
Mariposa CA 95338

2) Email • Send an email to the mcfac@mariposacounty.org

3) Drop Off: • Written communication can be dropped off at:

No matter which of these formats you choose to use for written communication (Mail, Email or Drop Off) please know that in order to ensure distribution to the committee prior to their consideration of the agenda, and in order for your written comments to be placed into the record it must be received no later than 8:00 a.m. on the day of the meeting.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Fire Department at 209-966-4330.
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Mariposa County Fire Advisory Committee

MEETING AGENDA

August 10, 2023

- 1. Roll Call - Secretary**
- 2. Approval of Minutes: July 19, 2023,**
- 3. Public comments:**
- 4. Discussion and Possible Action/Recommendations:**
 - a. Official introduction of John Patton as Wildfire Mitigation Coordinator and CWPP update.
 - b. Formation of IRWIN project privatization scoring sheet working group.
 - c. Update from Regional Resilience Grant Program (RRPG) grant ad-hoc committee
 - d. Update on fire fee study discussion with the BOS regarding fee's for service of plan review and inspections.

Final CWPP is available here: <http://www.mariposacounty.org/2448/Community-Wildfire-Protection-Plan>

6. Updates, Activity Reports and Future Items

- a. Members
- b. Any future agenda items

7. Adjourn

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in meeting, please contact the Fire Department at 209-966-4330

Mariposa County Fire Advisory Committee Minutes, July 19, 2023

- 1. Roll Call:** Glenn Cahill, Lacey Sharp, Alison Deak, Wayne Forsythe, Russ Marks, John Patton, Gary Colliver, Yana, Valacovich, Barbara Cone, Melinda Barrett, Will Fassett, Christina Decko, Wes Smith, Pat Laeng, Danette Toso, Dave Angelini
- 2. Approval of Minutes:**
Changes requested: “Paddi Hill” not Patty Hill in MCFSC updates
Approved unanimously with requested changes: Moved by Russ Marks, Seconded by Tara Fouch-Moore
- 3. Public Comments:** *No public comment*
- 4. Discussion and Possible Action:**

- a. Discussion of upcoming grant opportunities, potential projects, and partnerships**

Regional Resilience Grant Program applications are due August 29th. This is meant to be a multi-jurisdictional and collaborative application. If the county wanted to apply, they could apply with the SSMN and this would count as cross-jurisdictional. If there was any interest in pursuing projects related to the CWPP Action Plan, this may be an option. Grant is focused on climate resilience and could be for either planning or implementation.

MAIN DISCUSSION TALKING POINTS:

- There is a need to prioritize/rank projects and have potential partners listed. This could be based off the IRWIN prioritization list that enables members to bring forward projects and score them as a group. A workgroup may be the best mechanism for achieving this. YS RC&DC also has a prioritization list template that Erin will share with the group.
- It is important for members of MCFAC that are interested in pursuing specific grants bring these to the group early to avoid conflict/competition on applications.
- County was suggested as the main applicant for RRPg grant and Planning is considering applying as climate adaptation element of the General Plan. This would be stronger with partnerships (and three partners – for example, county + tribe + NGO - are required for the grant)

Motion by Tara Fouch Moore to convene an adhoc committee with Planning and other members appointed by the interim chair to explore applying for the RRPg Grant to end August 29th, Seconded by Wayne Forsythe, Approved Unanimously. Tara Fouch-Moore, John Patton, Will Fassett, Barbara Cone, Alison Deak, and Melinda Barrett appointed to committee.

b. Presentation by Yana Valacovich – Forest Advisor, University of California Cooperative Extension Humboldt and Del Norte Counties

*** See attached slides*

c. Discussion regarding biomass utilization and how it relates to fuel reduction efforts

Last month, a question came up about how biomass utilization relates to fuels reduction. It allows us to use the produced biomass to create energy, burn the biomass more cleanly, and has become a factor in grant competitiveness. An additional benefit of the biomass plant in Mariposa is that it reduces the transportation distance for material and the plant will pay for the material.

Biomass has a huge advantage because it provides 24-hour power and as we expand the electrical grid for EVs, we will need more capacity for power at night. Biomass has been more costly than wind and solar so most of the investment didn't go there for a long time but because of supply chain issues and COVID, wind and solar is getting more expensive. But this doesn't factor in the fuels management/wildfire risk reduction/air quality benefits of biomass. The materials taken at the biomass plant in Mariposa are required to be "sustainably harvested" and the plant is versatile in what it can take (includes ag waste, chips, slash, etc.).

Discussion about Community Choice Energy Aggregation (CCAs)

In CA, communities can bundle together and become the purchaser of energy on behalf of other entities. In Humboldt County, they've created an energy authority that allows them to purchase a desired amount of energy off the grid for their needs. PG&E continues to provide the transmission services and the contracts but it creates a place for the community to decide what's best for themselves. Community members can opt out and the community decides whether they want to choose clean, low-cost, or other factors in the energy they buy.

Melinda Barret talked with Supervisors in the past but there needs to be someone in the county government structure that is familiar with the topic because it is complex. It requires creating a joint powers authority. Butte County is letting other counties join them. CCAs allow the community to choose energy in a way that meets their values (certain percent local, certain percent green/biomass utilization, etc.). The plant in Mariposa will provide 20% of the energy needs of Mariposa. MB worked in LA on this same topic and would be happy to continue this conversation with supervisors.

5. Updates, Activity Reports, and Future Items

Raquel Sandoval, Mariposa OES: OES is still waiting for a response on FEMA grant for \$3.8 million Bumguardner Ridge fuels reduction project, working on storm damage recovery, and getting ready to start a debris disposal program

Dave Angelini – No comment

Christina Decko, CAL TRANS: Working on a fuel reduction contract for CAL TRANS, Mariposa County is included in the contract but this will not be live until 2025. Only a small portion of it that will be done on Hwy 49. Christina will give updates at future meetings.

Lacey Sharp, Happy Goat: Happy Goat is booked with contracts through September and January through July 2024. They are looking at getting a second herd of goats and bringing excavators out to project sites to decrease time needed for clearance in heavy brush areas. They are now offering to do multi-species grazing operations with cattle if fencing is right and leave them there at no cost to landowners.

Alison Deak, UC Cooperative Extension: UCCE doing several home hardening and defensible space workshops during the week with Yana Valacovich, including field tour with Mariposa RCD. They are in the process of writing a NRCS grant for research study in Mariposa, Madera, and Fresno Counties on the effects of thinning, prescribed fire, goat grazing, and coupled treatments on soil and fuels treatments effectiveness.

Tara Fouch-Moore, Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation: – SSMN is looking for a registered professional forester with experience working with Tribes to help with forest management plan for Mariposa Creek project. The contract was received for the Sierra Priest Project.

Danette Toso, Mariposa BOS: Livestock Pass is now live. Community members can take a training to be able to evacuate livestock during disasters.

Russ Marks, Public Works: A consultant toured the three FEMA tank sites and they now have a preliminary set of plans. They should see bids starting in Fall but it may be difficult to get bidders. They will likely need to make choices on how to minimize project to reduce costs.

Will Fassett, Mariposa County Grants – County is looking at USFS community wildfire defense grant up to \$10 million to implement a piece of CWPP. It should be a focus of this group or the working group to identify the right project.

Gary Colliver: no comment

Barbara Cone, Mariposa County Fires Safe Council: FSC is waiting on three grant applications and should hear in the next three weeks. These include the planning grant for land behind hospital, Bumguardner Ridge fuel break, and Lushmeadows ladder fuels project. They are using title-III funds for planning on fuel removal projects working with CAL FIRE. They have a bid walk for Bullion Ridge next week – They will only be bidding portions with access while negotiating with PG&E for storm damage repair on road. Sixteen contractors have been invited and they are encouraging smaller contractors to group together to bid. FSC has been meeting with Eastern Madera County FSC to provide technical assistance with grant tracking.

Melinda Barrett, Mariposa County RCD: RCD is intending to apply for another forest health grant with Yosemite and for CAL FIRE Wildfire Prevention Grant Community Education grant for home hardening program. They are very interested in working with Cal Trans and discussions with them and California RCD are ongoing.

6. Adjourn

Motion by Russ Marks, Seconded by Barbara Cone

Preparations for the 2023 fire season:

Reason for Hope

Mariposa County Fire Advisory Committee

Yana Valachovic, UC Cooperative Extension Forest Advisor

July 18, 2023



Photo: Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety

Week of outreach

WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS WORKSHOPS

Monday, July 17th, 6:00 pm @ The Local Grape, 5021 Hwy 140

Science on Tap: Science-Based Solutions to Prepare Your Home for Wildfire

Sit back, have a drink, learn about home hardening, defensible space & fire insurance in California

Tuesday, July 18th, 5:30 pm @ Midpines Hall, 6364 Hwy 140

Fire Safe Solutions for Design, Building, and Upkeep *(virtual option available)*

Learn what makes homes vulnerable to wildfire & how they can be upgraded to be more resistant

Wednesday, July 19th, 5:30 pm @ Mariposa Board Chambers, 5100 Bullion St.

Fire Insurance for Home Buyers and New Home Sales *(virtual option available)*

Participate in a discussion about how we can navigate changes in the home insurance market

Thursday, July 20th, 10:00 am @ Redbud Room in Mariposa Fairgrounds, 5007 Fairgrounds Rd

Home Hardening and Defensible Space Field Tours

Tour structures and examine real examples of how we can make our properties more wildfire resilient

For more information, visit the calendar of events at www.cemariposa.ucanr.edu or contact Alison Deak at 209-966-2417 or aldeak@ucanr.edu



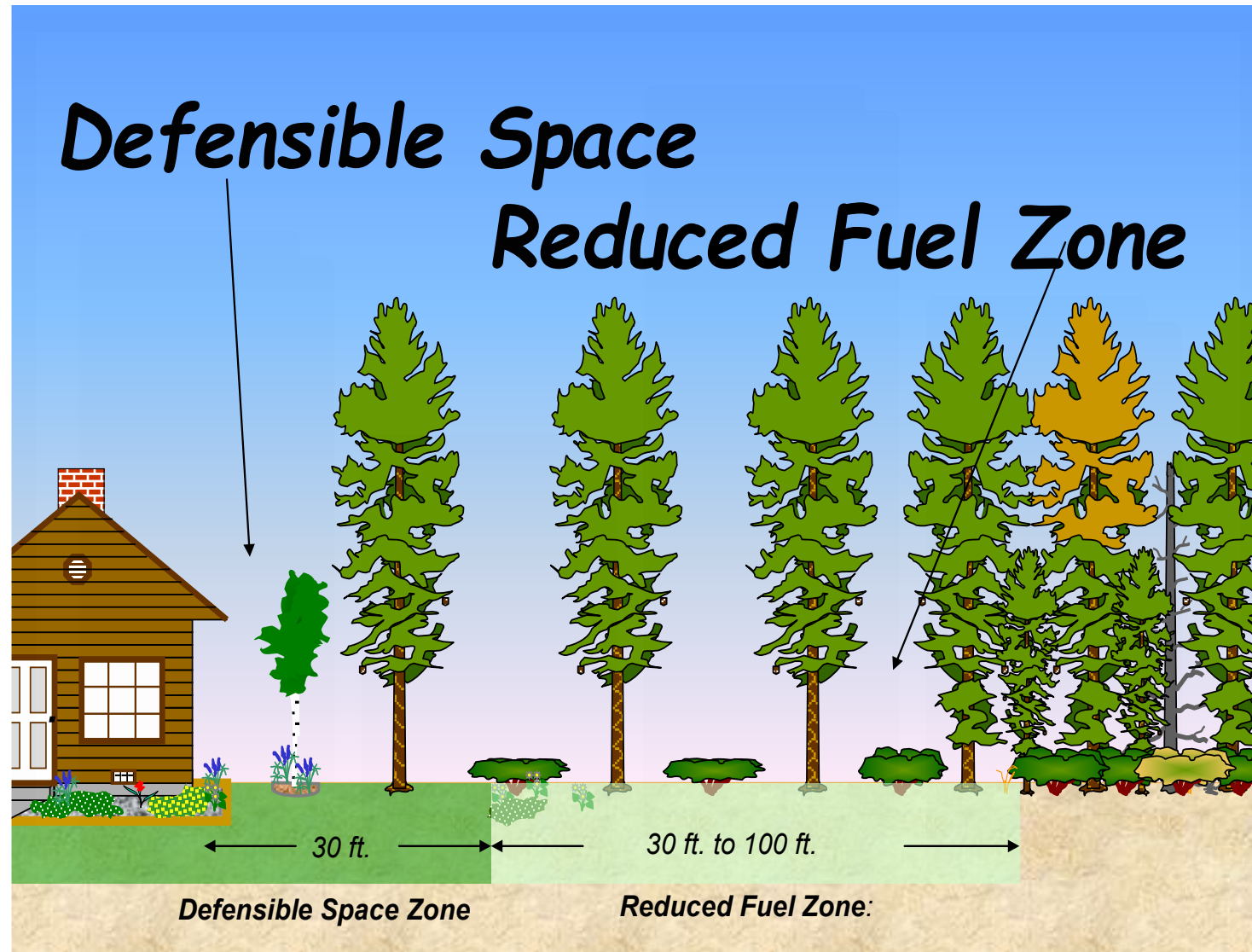
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
Agriculture and Natural Resources

UC Cooperative Extension

Funding for this project was provided by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection as part of the California Climate Investments Program through the California Fire Safe Council. The University of California Division of Agriculture & Natural Resources (UCANR) is an equal opportunity provider.

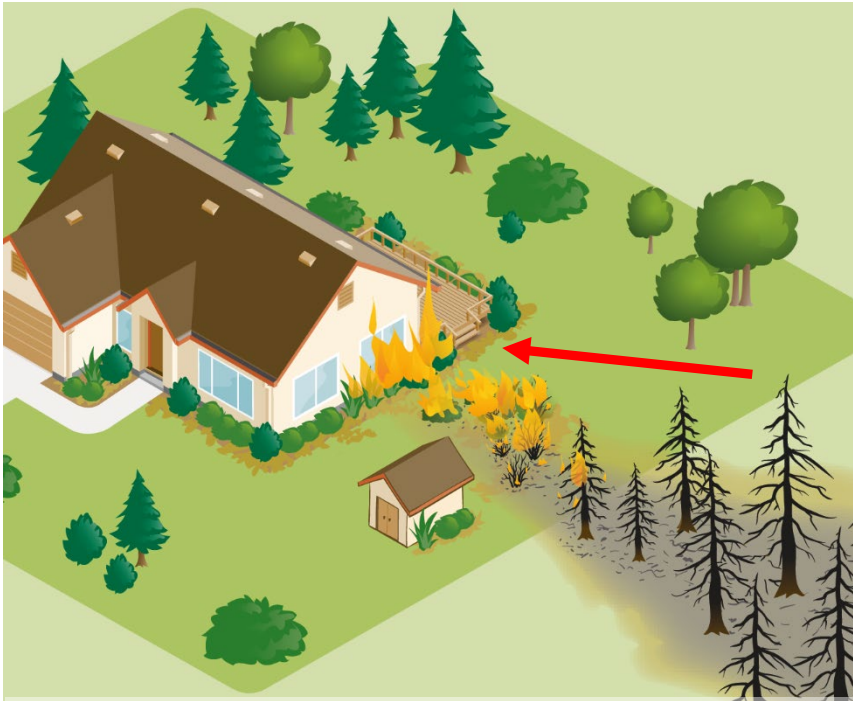
- ✓ Great team in the Mariposa
- ✓ Adaptation does not happen overnight
- ✓ Pace and scale takes time
- ✓ Sustained commitment
 - Partners in action
 - UC Master Gardeners
 - Contractors
 - Realtors
 - Retail- building materials suppliers

Wildfire mitigation is evolving



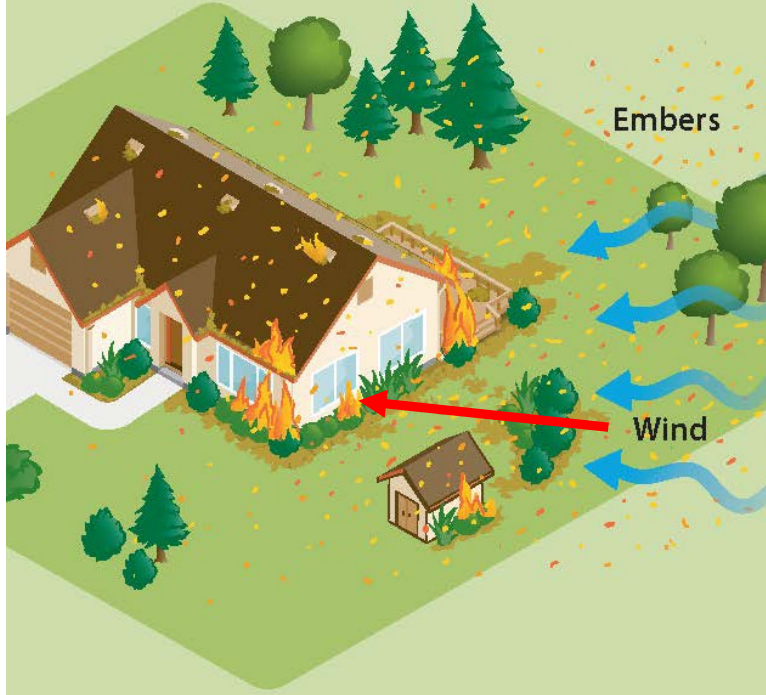
Pathways for wildfire

Direct flame contact



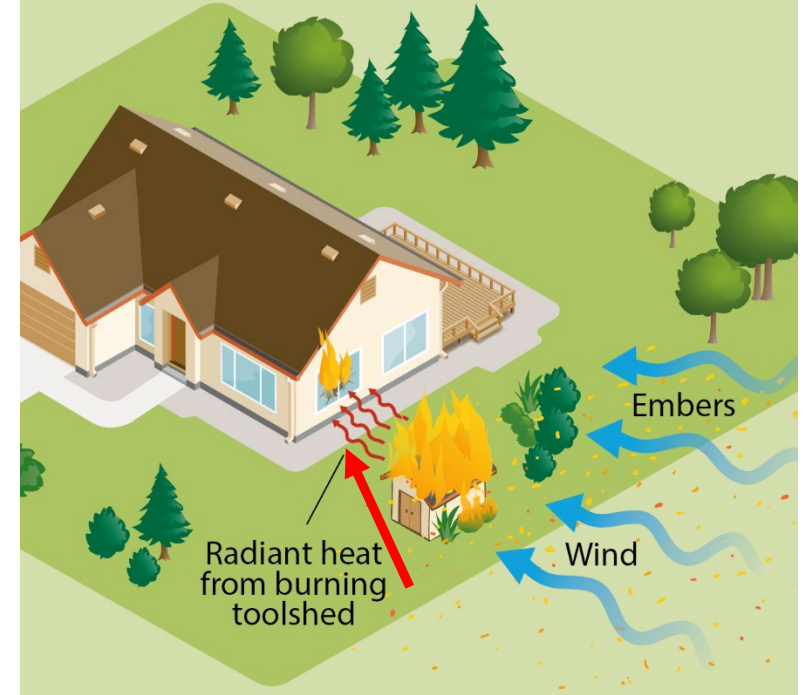
Defensible space implementation interrupts fire pathways and reduces the potential for direct flame contact

Embers

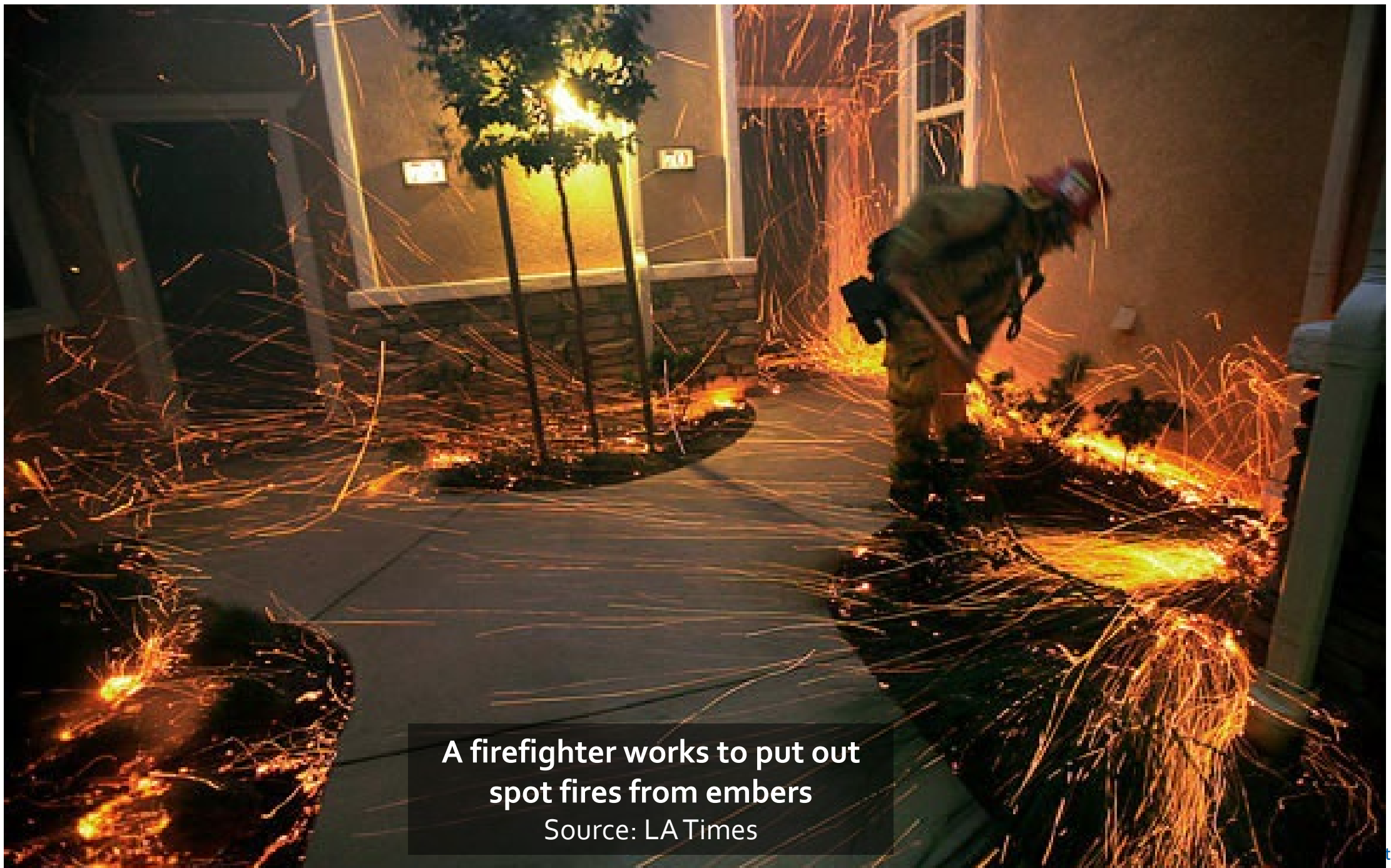


Home hardening with defensible space can help mitigate ember exposure

Radiant heat



Home hardening and fuel reduction can address potential radiant heat exposure



**A firefighter works to put out
spot fires from embers**

Source: LA Times

Today's conversation

❑ Review recent wildfires

- Camp Fire, Butte County, Nov. 2018
- Marshall Fire in Boulder, Colorado, December 2021
- Oak Fire, July 2022
- Research programs

❑ Opportunities

- Home loss is predictable
- There are actions within our control that can make a significant difference

❑ Insurance

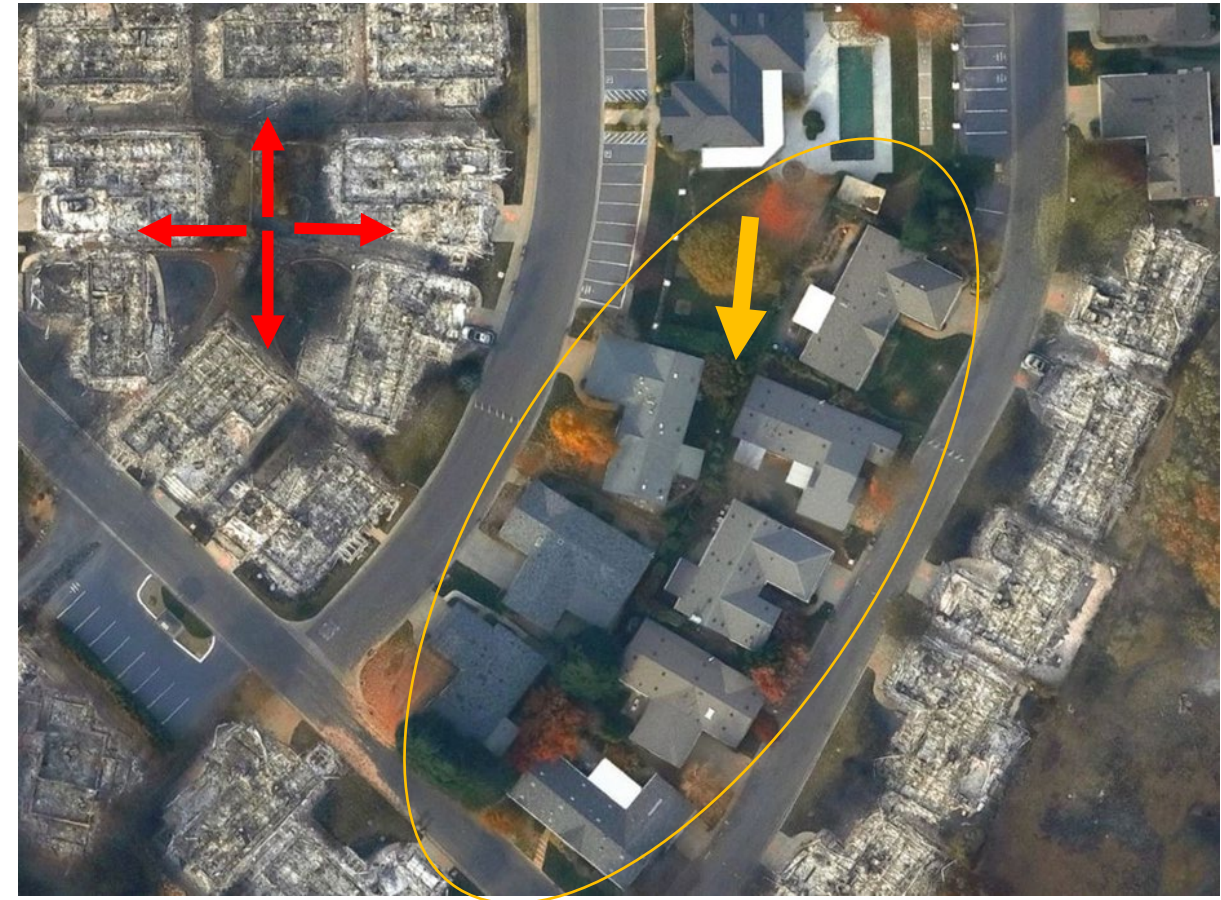
- <https://ucanr.edu/blogs/Green/index.cfm?tagname=Yana%20Valachovic>

Camp Fire, Paradise, CA



Neighborhoods requires community solutions

73% of homes were ≤ 18 m of a destroyed structure



2018 Camp Fire, Paradise, CA

Photos courtesy: Deer Creek Resources and WaldoAir

Knapp, E.E., Valachovic, Y.S., Quarles, S.L. et al. Housing arrangement and vegetation factors associated with single-family home survival in the 2018 Camp Fire, California. *Fire Ecology* 17, 25 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s42408-021-00117-0>

Lessons from the Marshall Fire Boulder, Colorado

Fire Date: December 30, 2021

Yana Valachovic, University of California Cooperative Extension
Steve Quarles, University of California Cooperative Extension and Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety
Daniel Gorham, Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety
Faraz Hedayati, Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety

 **University of California**
Agriculture and Natural Resources



Photo By Tristantech - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0,
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=113868246>





Pathways:
Grass to fence, house

Fire fighter response prevented additional spread



Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety Fire Lab showing the ember generator.



Home loss is predictable until we make changes

Roof-to-wall



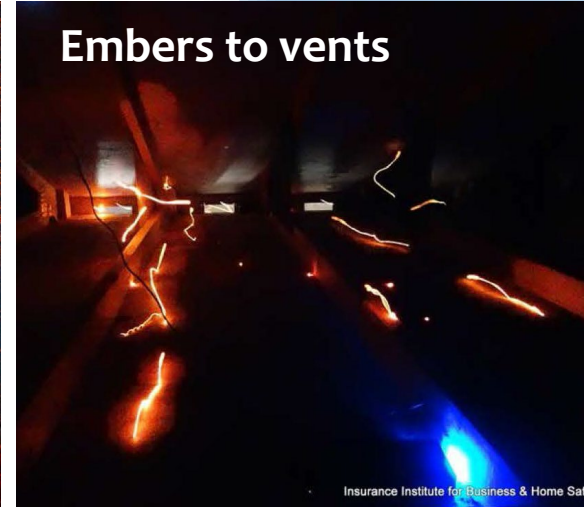
Fence to house



Rain gutter to roof edge



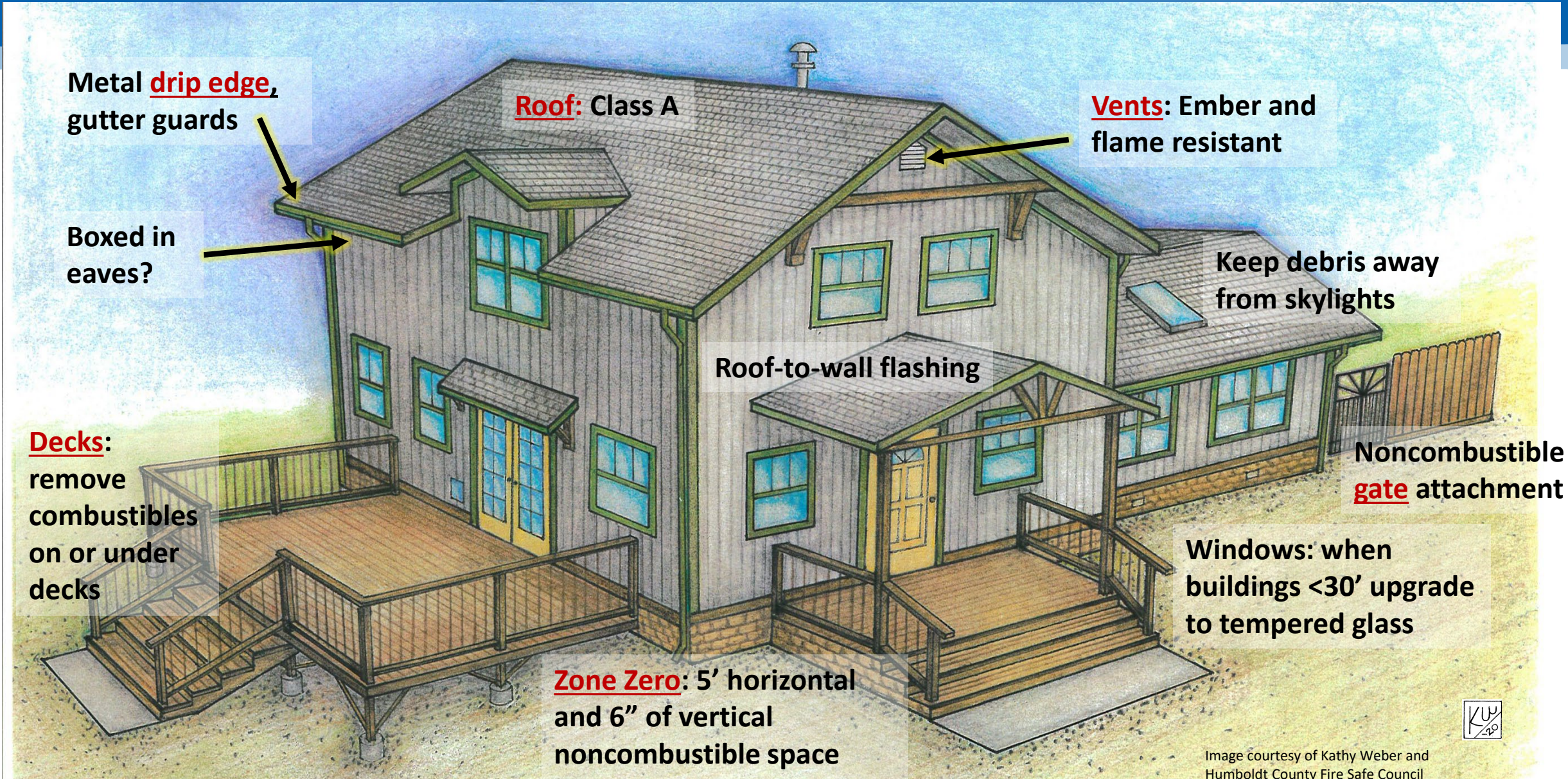
Embers to vents



Home hardening makes a difference

- ✓ **New construction-** CA Building Code for homes in the WUI
- ✓ **Existing buildings-** need incentive programs
- ✓ Need programs to assist the **most vulnerable**

Home hardening priorities



Fire Insurance- Options?

- **Shop around-** work with agents representing many companies
- Make a home **attractive to underwrite** (defensible space and home hardening) and lower fire score
- Insurance “plan of last result”: California **FAIR plan**
- **Independent assessment**
 - Department of Insurance- Safer from Wildfire Program (discount program)
 - Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety- Wildfire Prepared Home
- **Fire Wise** Community designation

Working with the Fair Plan- Two policies



Where to get help

- California Department of Insurance www.insurance.ca.gov
- United Policyholders www.uphlep.org
- California FAIR Plan www.cfpnet.com
- Independent Insurance Broker- find someone who represents multiple insurers
- Low-cost retrofit list: https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/media/p0elt0sp/low-cost-retrofit-list-update-2_17_22.pdf

Conclusions

- Wildfire policy and action evolves
- Seismic response was slow
- Shared vulnerability across all of California's ecosystem types and development patterns
- **There is a reason for hope:** the mechanisms of loss from wildfire are now much better understood
- Coupled approach: Defensible space and home hardening

